

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----181945Z 118680 /43

O 181730Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4395
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 1152

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CG, TZ,
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT NYERERE ON ZAIRE

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 1101

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT NYERERE ASKS US TO HELP KEEP EUROPEANS FROM
PAINCKING ON ZAIREAN SITUATION. HE REEMPHASIZES HIS CONCERN FOR
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ZAIRE, STRESSES THAT UNSTABLE SITUATION
IN ZAIRE IS BASICALLY DUE MOBUTU'S LACK OF POPULARITY, AND
SUGGESTS THAT MOBUTU SHOULD TURN TO AFRICANS TO HELP HIM WITH
HIS PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT NYERERE ASKED ME TO COME TO HIS MSASANI HOUSE
EVENING OF MARCH 18 FOR "ANOTHER CHAT ABOUT ZAIRE." HE SAID HE
HAD BEEN THINKING OVER OUR LAST TLAK ON THE SUBJECT AND HE WANTED
TO OFFER SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS AS HE KNEW US WAS GOING TO BE
CONSULTING WITH ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES ON SITUATION IN ZAIRE.

3. NYERERE BEGAN DISCUSSION BY RECOUNTING IN CONSIDERABLE AND
PLAUSIBLE DETAIL HIS OWN CLAIM TO TRUE NON-ALIGNMENT. HOWEVER,
HE HAD ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE CONVINCING WESTERN EUROPEAN POWERS OF
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THIS. BRITISH WERE BETTER THAN REST OF FORMER METROPOLES BUT
EVEN THEY OFTEN FORGOT THAT NYERERE DID MUCH OF HIS INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS IN THEIR COMMONWEALTH MEETINGS, BOUGHT MOST OF HIS
IMPORTS FROM THEM, AND SPOKE ENGLISH, NOT RUSSIAN OR CHINESE.

4. THE US, WHICH HAD NEVER BEEN A METROPOLE, NYERERE THOUGHT,
UNDERSTOOD HIS NON-ALIGNED POSITION BETTER, ESPECIALLY NEW

ADMINISTRATION. THEREFORE, HAVING JUST HEARD (I ASSUME ON BBC) THAT WE WERE GOING TO BE CONSULTING WITH OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES ON ZAIRE, HE WANTED ME ON HIS BEHALF TO URGE SECRETARY VANCE AND PRESIDENT CARTER TO TRY TO CALM THE EUROPEANS DOWN, NOT TO LET THEM PANIC. THE BELGIANS HAD ALREADY DONE SO WITH THEIR ARMS SHIPMENTS. IN CONTRAST TO THE THOUGHTFUL US PRESS, THE LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH WAS HYSTERICAL. THE USG TO DATE HAD PROCEEDED CAREFULLY AND CALMLY.

5. I REPLIED THAT I WAS GLAD HE APPRECIATED OUR APPROACH, BUT AS I HAD EMPHASIZED IN OUR LAST MEETING, THE THREAT TO ZAIRE'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY SEEMED REAL AND FRIGHTENING. NYERERE REPLIED THAT KATANGAN INVASION COULD INDEED BE THE SPARK THAT STARTED A CONFLAGRATION BUT THAT THE FLAMABILITY OF THE HOUSE GREW OUT OF MOBUTU'S MISRULE. WE HAD TO LOOK AT BOTH AT THE SAME TIME. WHAT HE WANTED THE WEST TO DO WAS NOT JUST TO RALLY AUTOMATICALLY TO MOBUTU'S DEFENSE BUT TO EVALUATE THE OVERALL SITUATION. NYERERE STILL BELIEVED NETO'S EXPLANATION AS TO WHY HE HAD LET KATANGANS GO IN. THEIR PRESENCE WOULD BE A PROBLEM BUT AFRICA WAS NOT GOING TO PERMIT ANY SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT TO SUCCEED. "PLEASE, PLEASE, ASK PRESIDENT CARTER TO GO SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY," HE CONCLUDED. "DON'T LET THE EUROPEANS DRAG YOU IN FURTHER THAN YOU SHOULD GO. TRY TO COOL THEM DOWN."

6. AFTER ABOVE WAS DRAFTED, BERNARD MUGANDA, FOREIGN MINISTRY EUROPE AND AMERICAS DIRECTOR, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING, ARRIVED AT MY HOUSE HAVING BEEN SENT BY PRESIDENT. NYERERE HAD GIVEN MUGANDA SUMMARY OF POINTS NYERERE WISHED TO MAKE SURE I UNDERSTOOD AND PASSED ON TO PRESIDENT CARTER IN TERMS

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FORUMULATING US VIEWS AND TRYING TO KEEP EUROPEANS FROM PANICKING. THESE WERE: (A) DON'T WORRY ABOUT LONG-TERM TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ZAIRE: AFRICANS WILL NEVER PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SECESSIONIST STATE; NYERERE HIMSELF WOULD CRISSCROSS THE CONTINENT TO PREVENT IT, (B) THE INVADERS ARE KATANGANS, NOT ANGOLAN, RUSSIAN, OR CUBAN AGENTS, (C) THE BASIC SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM IN MOBUTU'S INABILITY TO WIN ACCEPTANCE FROM ALL THE PEOPLES OF ZAIRE; HE HAS DONE BETTER IN HOLDING THE FORMER CONGO TOGETHER THAN ANYONE ELSE, BUT HE IS STILL VERY VULNERABLE BECAUSE OF CORRUPTION, INCOMPETENCE, ETC., AND (D) IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, MOBUTU'S ONLY ANSWER IS TO TURN TO HIS FELLOW AFRICANS AND SAY "I HAVE A PROBLEM I CAN'T HANDLE: HELP ME*" MUGANDA SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD ALSO ADDED "AND, IF YOU THINK, THE AMERICANS MAY BE AFRAID THAT NETO IS TRYING TO TAKE OVER ZAIRE, TELL THE AMBASSADOR THAT WE WOULD NEVER LET HIM DO IT."

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EXDIS

7. MUGANDA ALSO NOTED THAT WORD HAD JUST BEEN RECEIVED THAT ZAIREAN AMBASSADOR LENGEMA HAD ARRIVED IN DAR ES SALAAM. NYERERE WAS GOING TO SEE HIM LATER TONIGHT AND WOULD TRY TO BE HELPFUL. HOWEVER, MUGANDA OPINED, IF LEGEMA PRESENTED SITUATION SOLELY AS ONE OF AN ATTEMPT BEING MADE BY COMMUNISTS TO TAKE OVER ZAIRE, NOT MUCH WAS LIKELY TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

8. COMMENT: WHILE NYERERE'S "OF ALL MY FRIENDS, YOU UNDERSTAND ME BEST" APPROACH SHOULD STILL BE TAKEN WITH A BIT OF SALT, I BELIEVE HIS TRUST IN THE US IS IN FACT FAR GREATER NOW THAN IN THE PAST. I KNOW THAT HE SPEAKS FREELY TO HIS CONFIDANTES OF HIS GREAT FAITH IN PRESIDENT CARTER. HIS DESIRE THAT THESE THOUGHTS OF HIS GET TO THE PRESIDENT WAS OBVIOUSLY DEEP AND PERSONAL. OF WHAT USE THEY MAY BE TO US IN TRY TO DEAL WITH THE ZAIREAN SITUATION, I DON'T KNOW. IN OPERATIONAL TERMS, I CAN OFFER ONLY THIS; AS LONG AS WE DO NOT THROW OUR FULL WEIGHT BEHIND MOBUTU, WE CAN PROBABLY COUNT ON NYERERE'S BEING REASONABLY RESPONSIVE TO ANY PROPOSALS FOR DEFUSING OF THE SITUATION WE MAY HAVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF WE AND THE EUROPEANS END UP FULLY BEHIND MOBUTU, WE CAN EXPECT CONSIDERABLE HOSTILITY FROM NYERERE AND THE RADICAL AFRICANS OF WHICH HE IS A FAIRLY MODERATE REPRESENTATIVE.

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9. I DO NOT THINK ANY IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO NYERERE IS NECESSARY, THOUGH WE SHOULD KEEP UP THE DIALOGUE AS LONG AS THE POSSIBILITY

OF SOME COMMON US-TANZANIAN VIEW OF THE ZAIREAN SITUATION
REMANINS. DEPENDING ON HOW US POLICY IS EVOLVING, I BELIEVE THAT
A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER INDICATING APPRECIATION FOR
NYERERE'S THOUGHTS AND A DESIRE TO CONTINUE US-TANZANIAN
DISCUSSIONS ON THE MATTER MIGHT BE USEFUL.

DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT AS APPROPRIATE.
SPAIN

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